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SOME
OBSERVATIONS
On these TWO
SERMONS
OF

Doctor WISHART'S,
Which have given Offence to the
Presbytery of *Edinburgh*.

Acts xvii. 11. *These were more noble—and
searched the Scriptures daily, whether those
Things were so.*



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To the very REVEREND

Mr. J--N MA---N, and Mr.
JA--S BAN---TYNE, *Ministers*
of the Gospel in Edinburgh;

VERY REVEREND,



OUR several Essays, in Favours
of the Purity and Peace of this
Church, by beginhning to coun-
termine a late Settlement in the
College, and another at the *West-kirk*, which
were for a Time suspected by you to be con-
trary to these valuable Interests, or at least to
be some other Way interfering with your In-
tentions and Designs, have turned my Thoughts
towards you both on this Occasion, as the most
proper Persons, to whom this small Perfor-
mance,

DEDICATION

mance, such as it is, should be dedicated; being hopeful, that upon some further Perusal of the two Sermons, on which thir Observations are made, and a more full Consideration of all Circumstances, you will perceive somewhat both in them, and in the Author hereafter referred to, which does very little favour the Purity and Peace of this Church, and not much resemble either that excellent Essay upon the Method of Gospel-preaching, or your worthy Friend, who lately well filled that Chair, to which the said Author would, with your good Assistance, willingly succeed.

THE World, I'm perswaded, will never be so wicked, as to imagine, that you have been influenc'd by any By-ends and Views in your past Conduct, as to the Affair of Doctor *Withart*; the steady and uniform Part you have always been in use to act, and your vigorous Opposition to the Tools of a Party, so long as you found it convenient, leaves no Room for the most Malicious to suspect, that either the

Fears

DEDICATION.

Fears of losing what you are already possess of, as the just Reward of your Merit, or the Hopes of procuring the Advancement of a Friend, will, in the least, bias your Judgment, or make you at all coldrise or indifferent as to the Interests of Truth and Peace: And tho', as I am inform'd, you both voted for Mr. *Wisbart* at the Moderation of the Call, not having then seen his Sermons, and so not appriz'd of the erroneous Doctrine deliver'd in them; yet now that you have come to the Knowledge of it, and are Witnesses to the strong Aversion of the Body of the Inhabitants, you need not be asham'd to alter your Conduct upon better Information. You know, 'tis not the first Time you have done so in the like Cases, particularly when the Reverend Mr. *G--die's* Call to the Good Town was in Agitation, you were at first much against it, and vigorously oppos'd it; but upon better Information as to that Gentleman's Character, and some other Circumstances, you both voted for him at the Moderation.

TO

DEDICATION.

TO conclude, tho' you have not as yet acquiesced in the Presbytery's Sentence, but signified your Dissatisfaction with it, yet considering your usual Caution has kept you from joining in the Appeal, I flatter myself, that upon Perusal of the following Sheets, and considering the present Situation of Affairs, you will, at least, become less keen for the Doctor's Settlement. He is a much younger Man than either of you; and I am much of the Mind, that if he should come to be a Member of your Presbytery, he will fail as much in his Respect to some Ministers of the oldest Standing, as the said Presbytery lately did in their Election of Members to the Assembly.



OBSER.

OT



OBSERVATIONS

O N

Dr. *Wishart's* two Sermons, &c.

T will, I hope, be allow'd, that 'tis of great Importance to the Interest and Peace of this Church, that those who are Ministers in *Edinburgh* especially, should be sound in the Faith, and very circumspect in their Manners and Conversation; that they should be such as maintain no Doctrines inconsistent with our known Standards, nor allow themselves in any Practices that by these Standards are condemned.

WHETHER or not this be the Case with Mr. *Wishart*, will, I hope, pretty evidently appear from the following *Observations* made upon two of his Sermons, printed and publish'd to the World, and which have fallen into my Hands.

THE first I had Occasion to see, was preach'd at *London* the 3d July 1732, before the *Societies for Reformation of*

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Manners, and has this Text prefix'd to it, *Isa. v. 20. Wo unto them that call Evil Good, &c.*

UPON reading the Text, and considering the Occasion, and the Nature of the Audience, I expected a good Bible-*sermon* against Sin and Wickedness, in Principle and Practice: I imagined our learned Doctor would have imploy'd his Rhetorick in denouncing the Judgments of GOD against Sinners, and setting in Array the Terrors of the LORD before their Eyes; I expected that, in Imitation of the great Apostle of the *Gentiles*, he would have *reasoned of Righteousness, Temperance, and Judgment to come*, in such a Manner, as to make the Infidel Part of his Audience (if any such there were) *tremble*, and have endeavour'd to persuade Men, that however they may now roll Sin as a *sweet Morfel* under their Tongue, bide it and not forsake it, yet sooner or latter their Meat in their Bowels will be turned thereby, and it will prove as the Gall of *Asps* within them: That however they may now please themselves with calling Evil Good and Good Evil, and acting as if there were no Difference between them, that yet it should be *well with the Righteous*, and *ill with the Wicked* in another World, however it fared with them in this. In a Word, I expected he would have told his Hearers, that *Atheism* and *Infidelity*, in Principle and Practice, will involve Men not only in temporal Inconveniencies, but also in eternal Woe and Misery.

BUT this, it seems, is not a polite Way of Preaching; this is not the Way to promote a liberal Piety and Virtue, a Relish for true Goodness, and Savour of Honesty in the Mind: For with him, the Awe of future Rewards and Punishments, will be as ineffectual to the promoting any valuable Purposes of Religion or Morality, as *Whips* and *Sugar-plumbs*, unless the Nature and Justice of them be explain'd; curious Divinity! but unknown in this Church before; I pray GOD we may never hear more of it: For my own Share, I am still persuaded, That, seeing GOD, in his Word, has thought fit to address himself to our Hopes and Fears, the two great Springs of our Actions; and seeing

ing CHRIST and his Apostles make Use of the Hopes of Heaven, to engage Men to the Practice of their Duty, and of the Fears of Hell to deter them from Sin and Wickedness, I am still persuaded, I say, that these Motives are more likely to prevail towards the promoting a Reformation of Manners, than our Author's subtil and metaphysical Reasoning upon a *Taste, Beauty, Symetry, Self-enjoyment*, and the like : And my Reason for it is, that I find the one made Use by the Spirit of GOD in sacred Scripture, and the other by my Lord *Shaftsbury*, with whose *Characteristicks* our Author (if we may judge of him by his two Sermons) seems to be better acquainted than with his Bible, at least he seems to have entered more into the Spirit of the one than of the other : And I am hopeful, that any Judicatory of this Church, before whom his Call may come, will think it more for our Interest and Peace, that the old Way of Preaching be continued, than that this more modern and polite Way be introduced here, by the Example of so great a Name as the Principal of the College of *Edinburgh*, and a Minister of the City. For however some may imagine, that this Kind of Doctrine will take with a great many of those that set up for a polite Taste, and will be born with, or conniv'd at by others that are great Friends to what they call *Liberty*, yet I am persuaded this Church will not suffer it to pass without Censure, even though they should be loaded with the odious Character of *Persecutors* and *injurious*.

Liberty, Charity and Moderation are very fine Things, and great Names ; but they have been, and are still much abus'd by some Men, who level them at the Ruin of our Religion and Liberty, and make Use of them to gild over a deadly Poison : And therefore, when I find them coming from the Mouths or Pens of such Persons as are not very strict in their Principles, or circumspect in their Practice, I am inclined to suspect them, and to fall in with the wise Advice of *Laocoon*, which the unthinking Multitude so foolishly neglected.

—Ulla putatis

Dona carere dolis Danaum? sic natus Ulysses?
Aut hic inclusi ligno occultantur Achivi;
Aut hæc in nostros fabricata est machina muros,
Inspectura domos, venturaque de super urbi,
Aut aliquis latet error, equo ne credite Teucris,
Quicquid id est, timeo Danaos & dona ferentes.

IT is very common for those who have a Dis-esteem of the peculiar Doctrines of Christianity, and a cold Indifference as to the Concerns of Truth, to plead for Liberty, and a Right of private Judgment, in such a Manner as thereby to break down all the Boundaries of Truth, and Bulwarks against Error. And I am exceeding sorry to find the Doctor so far embarqued with Persons of this Complexion, as he seems to me plainly to be, when he says *Page 29.* "That the Method of punishing Offenders is to be confin'd to such Crimes of the vicious as are hurtful to others about them, or disturb the Peace of human Society:" And, in Consequence of this, exhorts his Hearers *Page 30.* "carefully to beware, that under Pretence of punishing Crimes, they do not unjustly restrain Men from their natural, unalienable Right of enquiring for themselves in Affairs of Religion, and acting agreeable to the Light of their own Minds, so far as it does not lead them to commit any Matter of Wrong, or wicked Lewdness, by which their Neighbours are injured, or their natural or civil Rights invaded." And at the same Time he tells them, "That to do otherwise, is to suppress by Violence the Right of Conscience, or private Judgment in Matters of Religion." And then adds, "How absurd and inconsistent would it be, if the Members of Societies for Reformation of Manners, should themselves, and pretending to act in that Character too, be guilty of the greatest Iniquity and Injustice; should become Persecutors and injurious? Or permit themselves to be made the Instruments, or Patrons of any Motion or Attempt to deprive their Fellow-subjects of any of their valuable Liberties or Privileges, or infringe any of these natural or civil Rights, in the Possession and Exercise

" of

" of which, 'tis the proper Office of the Civil Magistrate to
 " protect and defend all good Subjects?"

HAD these Words dropt from the Pen of a *Colins, Tindal, Woolston, Mandevil*, or the like, one needed not to have been surprized, but to find them uttered and published by a Presbyterian Minister, who has subscribed our Confession, is indeed astonishing; for sure I am they contain Sentiments diametrically opposite to the Doctrines there taught us.

To clear this now, we need but cast our Eyes upon *Confess. Chap. 20, Sect. 3, 4. They who upon Pretence of Christian Liberty do practice any Sin or cherish any Lust, do thereby destroy the End of Christian Liberty, which is, that being delivered out of the Hands of our Enemies, we might serve the Lord without Fear in Holiness and Righteousness before him all the Days of our Life. Sect. 4. And because the Powers which GOD hath ordained, and the Liberty which CHRIST hath purchased, are not intended by GOD to destroy, but mutually to uphold and preserve one another, they, who upon Pretence of Christian Liberty, shall oppose any lawful Power, or the lawful Exercise of it, whither it be Civil or Ecclesiastical, resist the Ordinance of GOD; and for their publishing of such Opinions, or maintaining of such Practices as are contrary to the Light of Nature, or to the known Principles of Christianity, whither concerning Faith, Worship or Conversation, or to the Power of Godliness, or such erroneous Opinions or Practices, as either in their own Nature, or in the manner of publishing or maintaining them, are destructive to the external Peace and Order which CHRIST hath established in the Church; they may lawfully be called to an Account, and proceeded against by the Censures of the Church, and by the Power of the Civil Magistrate.*

AND *Chap. 23. Sect. 1. GOD the supreme LORD and King of all the World, hath ordained Civil Magistrates*

strates to be under him over the People, for his own Glory, and the publick Good; and to this End hath armed them with the Power of the Sword, for the Defence and Encouragement of them that are good, and for the Punishment of them that are Evil-Doers. Sect. 3. He hath Authority, and it is his Duty to take Order that Unity and Peace be preserved in the Church; that the Truth of GOD be kept pure and intire; that all Blasphemies and Heresies be suppress'd, all Corruptions and Abuses in Worship and Discipline prevented or reformed, and all the Ordinances of GOD duly settled, administred and observed.

How unlike is Mr. *Wisbart's* Doctrine to that of our Confession?

MR. *Wisbart* says, "The Method of punishing Offenders, is to be confin'd to such Crimes of the Vicious as are hurtful to others about them, or disturb the Peace of human Society; Mr *Wisbart* is for the Magistrates punishing no Crimes but such as are Matters of Wrong, or wicked Lewdness, by which our Neighbours are injured, or their natural or civil Rights invaded; and tells us, that to act otherwise, is to infringe upon Liberty, Right of Conscience, and private Judgment."

BUT our Confession asserts, *That they who upon Pretence of Christian Liberty, do practise any Sin, or cherish any Lust, (mark the Expression) even tho' it be not a Matter of Wrong or wicked Lewdness by which our Neighbours are injur'd, or their natural or civil Rights invaded; if it be a Sin whereby GOD is dishonoured, Religion wounded, or precious and immortal Souls in Danger of being ruin'd, such Persons, says our Confession, destroy the End of Christian Liberty.*

AGAIN Mr. *Wisbart* says, "Men are not upon Pretence of punishing Crimes, to be restrain'd from the free Exercise of their natural and unalienable Right of enquiring for them."

“ themselves in Affairs of Religion, and acting agreeably to
 “ the Light of their own Minds, so far as it does not lead
 “ them to commit Matter of Wrong or wicked Lewdness,
 “ whereby their Neighbours are injur'd, or their natural or
 “ civil Rights invaded.”

BUT our Confession teaches us, That GOD hath ordain'd Civil Magistrates to be under him over the People, and that not only for the publick Good, protecting Men in their natural and civil Rights against Matters of Wrong and wicked Lewdness, but *for his own Glory*; and that for this End, he hath armed them with the Power of the Sword for the Punishment of Evil-Doers, that is, Sinners of all Sorts, as I conceive, in so far as their Sins can come under his Cognizance, or be tried at any human Tribunal.

YEA further, our Confession teaches us, That if Men, upon Pretence of Christian Liberty, shall publish such Opinions, or maintain such Practices as are contrary to the Light of Nature; or to the known Principles of Christianity, whither concerning Faith, Worship or Conversation, or to the Power of Godliness, they may be proceeded against, not only by the Censures of the Church, but also by the Power of the Civil Magistrate, whose Duty, we are further told, it is to suppress all Blasphemies and Heresies of whatever Sort. In a Word, our Confession makes the Magistrate Keeper of both Tables of the Law; and the Compilers of it seem plainly to have been of Opinion, that he might punish any Sins against the first as well as against the second Table, without being either a *Persecutor* or *injurious*.

AND truly in my Judgment, they had good Reason from the Word of GOD to be of this Opinion: For, are not Idolatry, Witchcraft, Superstition, Blasphemy, Heresy, prophane Swearing, Sabbath-breaking, scoffing at Religion, ridiculing every Thing that's sacred and serious, Crimes to be punished by the Judges? Yes they are; and if we consult the sacred Scriptures, particularly the Passages quoted, as Proofs of these Articles of our Confession, which I have transcribed, we shall find

And exprefs Orders given by GOD himself for the secular Arm to interpose in these Matters. See to this Purpose, *Levit. xxiv. 16.* *And he that blasphemeth the Name of the LORD, he shall surely be put to Death, and all the Congregation shall certainly stone him: As well the Stranger, as he that is born in the Land, when he blasphemeth the Name of the LORD, shall be put to Death.* *Deut. xiii. 5. &c.* *And that Prophet, or that Dreamer of Dreams shall be put to Death (because he hath spoken to turn you away from the LORD your GOD, which brought you out of the Land of Egypt, and redeemed you out of the House of Bondage, to thrust you out of the Way which the LORD thy GOD commanded thee to walk in) so shalt thou put the Evil from the midst of thee.* See also, *Verse 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.* and the Reason of this severe Punishment is plainly intimated, *ver. 11.* *And all Israel shall bear and fear, and shall do no more any such Wickedness as this is among you,* *2 Chron. xv. 12, 13.* *And they entered into a Covenant to seek the LORD GOD of their Fathers, with all their Heart, and with all their Soul; That whosoever would not seek the LORD GOD of Israel, should be put to Death, whether small or great, whether Man or Woman.*

Is it not then strange to hear a Christian Protestant Presbyterian Minister, that has subscribed this very Confession, when preaching before Societies for Reformation of Manners too, dissuading them from being the Instruments or Patrons of any Attempt to deprive their Fellow-Subjects, of what he is pleased to call their valuable Liberties and Privileges, their natural and civil Rights in the Exercise and Possession of which, he says, 'tis the proper Office of the Civil Magistrate, to protect and defend all good Subjects? And as to his Notion of good Subjects, 'tis pretty plain from what goes before, that he reckons them such who are not guilty of any Matter of Wrong, or wicked Lewdness against their Neighbour, how highly soever they may affront GOD, or contemn Religion; and what he means by their valuable Liberties and Privileges, their natural and civil Rights, we may
 very

this, are made a Part of the Municipal Laws of Christian Kingdoms and Common Wealths, and particularly of our own, as is evident by two remarkable Acts of the Parliament of Scotland, *Charles II. Parl. 1st, Chap. 21.* "Who-
"soever, not being distracted in his Wits, shall rail upon, or
"curse GOD, or any of the Persons of the blessed Trinity,
"and obstinately continue therein, be proccessed before the
"Chief Justice, and being found guilty, punished with
"Death."

AND *William and Mary, Parl. 1st, Sess. 5th, Chap. 11.* this Act is ratified; and further it is enacted,
"That whosoever in Discourse or Writing, shall deny, im-
"pugn, or quarrel, argue, or reason against the Being of
"GOD, or any of the Persons of the blessed Trinity, or the
"Authority of the Scripture, or the Providence of GOD,
"are to be punished gradually, and for the third Fault by
"Death."

3tio, 'Tis to be noticed, that when the New Testament was written, there were no Christian Magistrates in the World; and therefore 'tis no Wonder there were not particular Precepts given to 'em, with respect to the punishing Blasphemy, Idolatry, Superstition or Heresy; yet we find, that the Apostle, when speaking of the Office of Magistrates in general, intimates to 'em, that 'tis their Duty to be *a Terror to Evil Doers*; and if they are so, then I conceive they will make it their Business to punish such as break the first, as well as those that break the second Table of the Law.

Lastly, Upon this Head let it be considered, that the Reason given, *Deut. xiii. 5, 6. &c.* Why such as blaspheme the Name of the Lord should be put to Death is, *because they had spoken to turn them away from the LORD their GOD, which brought them out of the Land of Egypt, and redeemed them out of the House of Bondage.* Now, one can scarce miss to observe, I think, that Christians are under as great Obligations to the GOD and Father of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, who hath redeemed us from the Hands

of our spiritual Enemies, as the *Jews* were to the GOD of *Israel*, that brought them out of *Egypt*; and that in consequence of this, the Christian Magistrate should punish Blasphemers and Idolaters, Hereticks and Infidels, as severely as the *Jewish* Magistrate did; and that when they do so, they deserve not the Epithets the Doctor is pleased to bestow upon them, of *Persecutors* and *injurious*. But I insist not further upon this.

HOWEVER, before I leave this Sermon of the Doctor's, I must take Notice of some Things he advances concerning the Education of Children, *Page* 33, 34. &c. 'Where he ascribes the general Corruption of Youth in a great Measure, to the gross and general Neglect of a rational and virtuous Education.' And again he says, 'I cannot help being apprehensive, that the Looseness and Debauchery so much lamented in many, who are observed to have had the Benefit of a religious Education, may often be found to proceed in a great Measure from that very Education itself, as it is managed.' And then a little below, he tells us what Kind of a religious Education it is he blames so much, *viz.* 'When the Care of Parents, or Instructors about the religious Part of Education, is almost wholly spent in inculcating upon young Ones the *Shibboleth* of a Party, making them acquainted with, and instilling into them a Regard for the particular Doctrines, or peculiar Forms of their own Sect, in which there may oft Times be found a Mixture of Things absurd and trifling, which yet are inculcated with as great Earnestness, and by the same Methods, with the most weighty and important Points, while great Pains are taken to inspire in them at the same Time, a strong Aversion to those of another Way of thinking; and that by Methods which even a childish Capacity may discern to be contrary to Equity and Charity: And instead of forming their Minds to a rational Sense of Good and Evil, a Taste and Relish for true Piety and Virtue, upon such Principles as will stand the Test of a most strict Examination; any Instances of good Practice are recommended and enforced by mere Authority, or by the Awe of future Rewards and Punishments, which, as they are made Use of, without

without ever explaining the Nature and Justice of them, can contribute no more to promote a liberal Piety and Virtue, a Relish for true Goodness, and a Savour of Honesty in the Mind, than *Whips* and *Sugar Plumbs*. These now are the Faults in a religious Education, the Doctor would have amended.

BUT let us see what Kind of Education it is, that he would have Parents and Instructors to give their Children, and those committed to their Charge. And of this he speaks, *Page 35.* near the Foot, &c. There he tells us, 'That the first and chief Care in training up of young Ones should be employed in forming their Minds right. But how? "Great Pains," adds he, must be taken to instill into them, according as their Capacities gradually open, some Understanding of the Nature of true Goodness and Virtue, good Thoughts of GOD, and of the Obligations we are under to him; just Notions of the Nature of pure and undefil'd Religion, as 'tis founded in a Sense of the unalterable Difference betwixt Moral Good and Evil, and the Belief of a perfectly good GOD, together with some just Understanding of the natural Tendency, and Influence of true Piety and Virtue, prevailing in the Heart of the present Improvement, Pleasure and Satisfaction of the Mind, and to the settled Peace and Tranquility of the whole Life; and with this Care to inform their Judgments, must be join'd the most careful and engaging Endeavours, to form their Minds to a Taste and Relish of true Goodness, Virtue and Piety, not only by describing to them, as clearly and fully as their Capacities will allow, some of the inward Enjoyments arising from them, but also by putting them upon reflecting on any Experience or Feeling of that Kind they themselves may have had, and leading them gently, and by winning Methods to make Trial in some Instances, and thus gradually training them to some Experience of this Sort. But above all, by the Influence of a good Example, affording them an easy familiar engaging View of the Beauty of Holiness and Goodness; such an Example of an exact Conformity, to the several Rules of pure and undefil'd Religion, as may set true Piety, and the sever

'ral Virtues to which it animates, before their Eyes, in its
 'native Amiability, and show them that it is a most kind and
 'benign, a most happy and comfortable Thing; in all which
 'great Care must be taken to suit the Manner of Instruction
 'and Perswasion, to the gradual opening of their Capacities,
 'to their Tempers, and the several Inclinations they early
 'discover, heedfully catching at all Advantages, afforded by
 'the natural Kindness and Tenderness of their Tempers, and
 'any little Sparks of Goodness, and a Sense of what is
 'fair and beautiful in Manners they shew of their own
 'Accord.

THIS now is the Plan of Education which the Doctor re-
 commends to Parents and Instructors; an Education upon
 this Plan is, no doubt, a rational and virtuous Education, to
 the gross and general Neglect of which he ascribes the gene-
 ral Corruption of Youth; and I shall not dispute it with
 him, whether or not it be a rational and virtuous Education;
 but I think I may, with great Justice, affirm it is not a Chri-
 stian One.

It is indeed a very new, and odd Kind of Education, I
 confess, and such as I never read or heard of before, and
 this, it may be, has prejudic'd me against it; for I own I am
 not much in Love with new Ways of Education, or new
 Schemes of Religion, however modish and fashionable; I
 have a strong Inclination towards *the good old Way*, which
 the LORD commands us to *ask for and walk in*, Is. vi.
 16. and a great Regard for *the Form of sound Words* con-
 tained in our Confession of Faith and Catechisms; It was up-
 on this Plan I received my Education, and, upon the strictest
 Examination I was capable of, I have never yet found Rea-
 son to blame my Parents, or others who assisted them in
 this Matter, for their Mismanagement of it: But indeed
 that Way of Education which the Doctor recommends, is nei-
 ther prescribed by, nor agreeable to our Confession of Faith
 and Catechisms, nor those of any Christian Church I ever
 saw; as I think will plainly appear if we consider which Kind
 of

of an Education it is which he blames, and what Kind of an Education he recommends.

AND, first, He blames Parents and Instructors for inculcating upon young Ones the *Shibboleth* of a Party, making them acquainted with, and instilling into them a Regard for the particular Doctrines, or peculiar Forms of their own Sect.

Now it were to be wished, that the Doctor had spoke out here, and told us what he means by a Party, what by the *Shibboleth* of that Party, what by the particular Doctrines, or peculiar Forms of a Sect; for it is too well known to be denied, that there have been, and still are many unhappy Divisions, Parties and Sects, amongst those who are professing Christians, yea and *Protestants* too: This was the Case in the Apostle *Paul's* Days, in the Church of *Corinth*, as you may see, 1 *Corinth*. xi. 18, 19. *I hear, says he, that there be Divisions among you, and I partly believe it; for there must be also Heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.* And as it was the Case then, so it is still; there are many different Denominations of professing Christians, that is to say, there are many Parties and Sects, to use the Doctor's own Words, and every one of these must needs have their different *Shibboleths*, their particular Doctrines and peculiar Forms. There is one Party of Christians, namely, those of the Church of *Rome*, whom we call *Papists*, and another Party of Christians, who have shaken off the *Romish* Yoke, and these call themselves *Protestants*. Now these later have some peculiar and particular Doctrines and Forms, very different indeed from those of the *Romish* Church, which may be called the *Shibboleth* of that Party, if the Doctor pleases. But whatever he may think, I shall always be of Opinion, that it is the Duty of Parents, and other Instructors, to make these committed to their Charge, well acquainted with, and instil into them a Regard for these particular Doctrines and peculiar Forms, whereby *Protestants* are distinguished from *Papists*; and that because these particular Doctrines are the Doctrines of the

the Bible, and these peculiar Forms, such as are either prescribed by, or agreeable to the Word of GOD. Yea, I cannot help thinking, that any Protestant Parent, or Instructor of Youth, who neglects the doing of this, fails very much in his Duty, and is unfaithful in discharging the Trust GOD has committed to him. I might give many Instances of these peculiar Doctrines; I shall only mention one, namely, that of the Perfection and Perspicuity of the sacred Scripture. This may very well be called a peculiar and particular Doctrine of Protestants. This the Doctor may call, if he will, the *Shibboleth* of that Party, for this, as much as any other, differenceth them from Papists. But still I think it is my Duty to inculcate this upon my Children, and others committed to my Charge, make them acquainted with it, and endeavour to beget in them the greatest Regard for it, whatever hard Name the Doctor may think fit to give me for so doing.

AGAIN, as Protestants have some particular Doctrines, so they have some peculiar Forms (I suppose he means) of Worship, whereby they are distinguished from Papists; they read the Scriptures, administer the Sacraments, and pray in a known Tongue, and the best reformed of them adhere to the Purity and Simplicity of the Gospel-worship, without the Mixture of human Inventions. In a Word, All of them make Use of no other Mediators or Intercessors but the Lord JESUS CHRIST only. Now, for my Part, I cannot see, that 'tis any Mismanagement of the Education of Youth, to instil into them a Regard for this peculiar Form and Way of Worship; and that because this is the Bible-way and Form of it, which teaches us, that as there is one GOD, so there is one Mediator betwixt GOD and Man, the Man CHRIST JESUS, and that 'tis our Duty to worship GOD, who is a Spirit, in Spirit and in Truth, and never to bring in the Inventions of Men into the Service of GOD.

BUT further, Christians are not only divided into *Papists* and *Protestants*, but these latter are sub-divided, alas, into many different Parties; amongst these there are some who
are

are known by the Name of *Calvinists*, others by the Name of *Lutherans*, *Arminians*, *Arians*, *Socinians*, *Antinomians*, and the like: Now, each of these different Parties have particular Doctrines peculiar to their Party, which, in the Doctor's Stile, may be called the *Sbibboleth* of that Party: If therefore I, who am what is commonly called a *Calvinist*, and believe the Doctrines contained in our Confession of Faith and Catechisms, to be the Doctrines of GOD's holy Word, shall teach my Children or Servants the Doctrine of the Imputation of Original Sin; the Doctrine of particular Election, without any Foresight of Faith or good Works; the Nature, and Necessity of Regeneration and Conversion, by the efficacious Operation of the Spirit of GOD; the Doctrine of imputed Righteousness; the Doctrine of Justification by Faith, receiving and resting upon CHRIST; the Doctrine of the Perseverance of the Saints, and others of the like Nature, in Opposition to *Arminians* and others; or if I shall teach them the Doctrine of a Trinity of Persons in the Unity of the Godhead, the true and proper Deity of the Son and Holy Ghost, and the Doctrine of CHRIST's Satisfaction, in Opposition to *Arians* and *Socinians*. In a Word, if I shall teach them the absolute Necessity of Gospel-holiness, in order to Salvation, in Opposition to *Antinomians*, must I be blamed, I say, for having mismanaged their Education? I conceive not: For however the Doctor, and Men of his modern and polite Taste in Religion, may call these Doctrines speculative Notions, Matters of Intricacy and Nicety, I look upon them as important and fundamental Articles of our holy Christian Religion, which GOD has plainly revealed to us in his Word, and calls for our Belief of, though they are such as we cannot fathom, or fully comprehend by our shallow Reason and Understanding in this State of Imperfection.

Secondly, As he blames Parents and Instructors for inculcating upon young Ones the *Sbibboleth* of a Party, making them acquainted with, and instilling into them a Regard for the particular Doctrines, or peculiar Forms of their own Sect, so he blames them for inspiring in them at the same Time a strong Aversion to those of another Way of thinking.

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HERE again we are at a Loss to know the Doctor's Meaning; for if, by what he here says, he means no more than that these Parents and Instructors are to blame, who teach their Children or Servants to be uncharitable, and to damn all those that differ from them in Principle or Practice, in Matters of the smallest Moment and Consequence, then he and I are perfectly agreed upon this Head. I am as much against this as any Man living; for there are many Things of lesser Moment and Consequence, that Men may differ in their Opinions about, and yet be good Christians, and with Respect to these, 'tis questionless our Duty to be very charitable to those who differ from us, yea to love and embrace them as Friends and Brethren in CHRIST.

BUT then there are other Things, such as these peculiar Doctrines whereby *Protestants* are differenced from *Papists*, and *Calvinists* differenced from *Arians*, *Socinians*, *Arminians* and *Antinomians*, which are by no Means of this Nature, and if a Man be careful to instruct his Children, and others committed to his Charge, in the Nature and Importance of these Doctrines, 'tis impossible for them not to have a strong Aversion at the opposite Errors. 'Tis true indeed, 'tis our Duty to love all Men, even our very Enemies; but we are not bound by the Rules of Christianity to love and embrace all Men as our Friends and Brethren: And therefore there is no Obligation upon one who is sound in the Faith, to love an erroneous Person as such; nor can I see, that it is any Fault in him to have an Aversion to his Errors, and even to account him his Enemy, and that because he is an Enemy to CHRIST, his Truth and Ways: Nor is it to be wondered at, if an orthodox Christian join with *David*, *Psal*, *cxxxix*. 21, 22. and say concerning the Enemies of the Truth, as he there does concerning wicked Men in general, *Do not I bate them, O Lord, that bate thee? And am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee? I bate them with a perfect Hatred, I account them mine Enemies.* Upon the whole, I think that Parent or Instructor is in no Fault at all, who inspires his Children, or others committed to his Care, with a strong Aversion to *Popery*, *Arianism*, *Socinianism*, *Armi-*

Arminianism, or *Antinomianism*, and the like Errors; yea I think he is in no Fault at all, if he represent the Patrons of these Errors as Enemies to the blessed Redeemer and his Truths, whatever the Doctor in his extensive Charity may think; nor is the Child mismanaged in his Education, tho' he be bred with an Aversion to those who in these Things above-mentioned, are of a different Way of thinking from him, in so far as their erroneous Opinions are *contrary to sound Doctrine, and the Power of Godliness*.

In the *third* Place, he blames Parents and Instructors for recommending and enforcing a good Practice by mere Authority, or the Awe of future Rewards and Punishments, which, he says, as they are made Use of without explaining the Reasonableness and Justice of them, can contribute no more to the promoting of a liberal Piety and Virtue, a Relish of true Goodness, and Savour of Honesty in the Mind, than Whips and Sugar-plumbs, *horresco referens!*

Who would not be astonished to hear or read such Doctrine, from the Mouth or Pen of a Christian? Here indeed the Doctor blames Parents and Instructors of Youth for what I never heard them blamed for before, nay, for what the Spirit of GOD enjoins them to do, and commends them for the Practice of. What? are not Parents, and every one vested with Power and Authority to employ that Power and Authority for GOD, and the Interest of his Glory? Are they not to employ their Authority for curbing of Sin and Wickedness in these committed to their Charge, and encouraging them in the Practice of Religion and Virtue? Are not Parents to enjoin their Children their Duty, and to interpose their Authority in the strongest Manner for this Purpose? Most certainly they are.

I suppose it will be allowed, that *Solomon* was as wise a Man, and as good a Preacher as our learned Doctor, and yet we find him exhorting Parents to use their Authority in the Education of their Children; this, I think, is plain from *Prov. xiii. 24. He that spareth his Rod, hateth his Son; but he that loveth*

loveth him, chasteneth him betimes. Prov. xix. 18. Chasten thy Son while there is Hope, and let not thy Soul spare for his crying. Prov. xxii. 15. Foolishness is bound in the Heart of a Child; but the Rod of Correction shall drive it far from him. Prov. xxiii. 13. With-hold not Correction from the Child; for if thou beatest him with the Rod, he shall not die. Prov. xxix. 15. The Rod and Reproof give Wisdom; but a Child left to himself, bringeth his Mother to Shame. And Verse 17. Correct thy Son, and he shall give thee Rest, yea he shall give Delight unto thy Soul. From all which I think 'tis plain, that Solomon here teaches Parents, and Instructors of Youth, to enforce and recommend a good Practice by their Authority.

BUT here perhaps the Doctor, or his Friends, may be ready to say, That what he blames is doing of this by mere Authority. To this I answer, That no wise Parent will, and I believe no Parent, who ever enforced, or recommended a good Practice to his Children, did neglect the other Means of recommending it; but many Times all other Means prove ineffectual; for, as Solomon says, *Foolishness is bound in the Heart of a Child*, and frequently it happens, that nothing else but *the Rod of Correction will drive it far from him*. Besides. Children need to be restrained from what is evil, and have what's good in Practice recommended to them, before they are capable of being wrought upon by such rational Arguments as the Doctor proposes; and what Methods shall Parents then use but mere Authority? For my own Part, I cannot help thinking, that a Parent would be much to blame, if he should neglect to interpose his Authority, even mere Authority, for restraining his Child from any Thing that's vicious, till he should be able to instruct him, as the Doctor proposes, in the Nature of true Goodness and Virtue, and give him just Notions of the Nature of pure and undefiled Religion, as it is founded in a Sense of the unalterable Difference betwixt moral Good and Evil. He must be come a good Length, not only in understanding the Principles of revealed Religion, but even those of moral Philosophy, before he be capable of this rational and virtuous Education, which
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the Doctor is so much in Love with; yea, I am afraid, that most Part of Children must necessarily want this Kind of Education altogether; for it is of such a Sort, that an honest Country-man or Mechanick, who has taken his Notions of Religion, and Manner of educating his Children, only from the Bible, our Confession of Faith and Catechisms, and is not at all acquainted with moral Philosophy, and the learned Disputes about the Foundation of moral Virtue, is wholly incapable of giving them; and therefore I'm of Opinion he had even better recommend a good Practice to his Children by mere Authority, and the Awe of future Rewards and Punishments, without ever explaining the Reasonableness and Justice of them, than let them go on in a bad One: For if once they come to be habituated to Sin and Wickedness, I am afraid that even the Doctor's rational Arguments, how strong soever he may imagine them, will prove too weak to get the better of their natural Corruption, and contracted vicious Habits: For my own Share, I am still of Opinion, that it is my Duty to *train up a Child* from his very Infancy, *in the Way that he should go*, and to make Use of my paternal Authority for this Purpose, mean while praying to GOD for a Blessing upon my Endeavours, and I think I have some Reason to hope, that *when he is old, he will not depart from it*: Yea, not only does the Spirit of GOD in Scripture enjoin this Way of Education which the Doctor blames, but highly commends those who made Conscience of it. See to this Purpose what you have, *Gen. xviii. 19.* where GOD, speaking of *Abraham*, says, that he *knew him, that he would command his Children and his Household after him, and they shall keep the Way of the LORD, to do Justice and Judgment, that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.* Here now we find *Abraham* highly commended by GOD, for commanding his Children and Household to keep the Way of the LORD; he was not, it seems, of the Doctor's Opinion, but made Use of his Authority, as a Parent and Master of a Family; and his Endeavours this Way were remarkably owned by GOD.

AND as these are commended in sacred Scripture, who use their paternal Authority in the Education of their Children, so these who neglected this Mean of Authority were remarkably reprov'd and chastis'd for it; this to me seems pretty plain in the Case of *Eli* and his Sons, of which we have the History, *1 Sam.* ii. 12, 22, 23, 24, 25. compared with *Chap.* iii. 13. Here now we have no Reason to believe, that *Eli's* Sons wanted a good Example from their Father, nor did he fail to instruct or reprove them, this is not what he's blam'd for by the Spirit of GOD; and indeed we find him arguing with them much in the Way that the Doctor proposes, *Ver.* 23, 24, 25. *And he said unto them, Why do ye such Things? For I hear of your evil Dealings by all this People. Nay, my Sons; for it is no good Report that I hear, ye make the LORD's People to transgress. If one Man sin against another, the Judge shall judge him, but if a Man sin against the LORD, who shall entreat for him?* But what the Spirit of GOD blames him for, *Chap.* iii. 13. is, because that though his Sons made themselves vile, yet he restrained them not. It was without all Doubt his Duty, as a Parent, to have interposed his Authority for this Purpose, and because he neglected to do so, and fell in with the Way of Education that the Doctor prescribes, GOD swear unto the House of *Eli*, that the Iniquity of *Eli's* House should not be purged with Sacrifice nor Offering for ever, *Ver.* 14.

UPON the Whole, I am still of Opinion, that a Parent is in no Fault at all, who recommends and enforces a good Practice upon his Children by his Authority; even mere Authority, when nothing else will do the Business, as is very frequently the Case: For tho' we should suppose, that mere Authority cannot make them truly religious, as indeed no other Means can, without the powerful Aids of divine Grace, yet mere Authority may be of great Use to keep them from the Practice of Vice and Profanity; and this I think is of no small Consequence in the Education of Children.

BUT

BUT the Doctor is not only an Enemy to the Authority of Parents, but even to the Authority of GOD himself, who has in his infinite Wisdom seen fit to enforce Obedience to his Laws, by the Awe of future Rewards and Punishments ; for, he says, ' That the enforcing a good Practice by the Awe of ' future Rewards and Punishments, without explaining the Nature and Justice of them, can contribute no more to promote a liberal Piety and Virtue, a Relish of true Goodness, and Savour of Honesty in the Mind, than *Whips* and *Sugar Plumbs.*' So that it seems, according to him, Parents must neither recommend and enforce a good Practice by their own Authority, nor yet by the Authority of GOD, and the Sanctions of his Laws, at least, their doing so, will in the Doctor's Opinion, be of no Effect, unless they are able to explain the Nature and Justice of these Sanctions.

BUT this is the most strange and surprising Doctrine I ever heard of, directly contrary to the Strain and Tenor of GOD's holy Word, in which we find Obedience to the divine Law, enforc'd with the Hope of Heaven or eternal Happiness, and Disobedience threatn'd with the Fear of Hell or eternal Misery ; nor can I well understand, what the Doctor means by Parents using these, without ever explaining the Nature and Justice of them. Sure no Parent that ever pretended to give his Children a religious Education, and to enforce a good Practice upon them by the Hope of Heaven, and Fear of Hell, can be supposed to have fail'd in laying before them, what the Scripture teaches us upon this Head ; namely, that the Happiness of Heaven, consisting in the eternal Enjoyment of GOD, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, is unspeakably great ; and that the Misery of Hell, consisting in the being banished eternally from the Presence of GOD, and confin'd to the scorching Flames of that devouring Lake, that burns with Fire and Brimstone, *Where the Worm dies not, and the Fire is not quenched,* is intollerable. And truly, as to any further Explication of the Nature of these future Rewards and Punishments, the Scripture seems to check our Curiosity in seeking to be wise above what is written ; while, as to the Happiness of Heaven, it tells us, *That Eye hath not seen,*
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Ear bath not heard, nor bath it entered into the Heart of Man to conceive the good Things the LORD bath laid up for them that fear him. And as to the Torments of Hell, we are told plainly, that we know not the Power of GOD's Anger, for *according to his Fear, so is his Wrath.* And then as for the Justice of these future Rewards and Punishments, I can see no Necessity for Parents explaining this to their Children ; for if it be plain from Scripture, that the infinitely holy, just, wise and good GOD, the supreme LORD of the Universe has annex'd such Sanctions to his Laws, I think it evidently follows, that these Sanctions are reasonable and just. And indeed every one that believes the Perfections of the Divine Being, and has so much Modesty as to own, that GOD is wiser than Men, will be ready to acknowledge, that whatever Sanctions he has been pleased to annex to his Laws, are just and reasonable ; so that I think the great Thing incumbent upon Parents, is to show their Children from the Word of GOD, that Heaven is promis'd to the Righteous, and Hell threatn'd to the Wicked, and that GOD is faithful to perform his Promises, and also wise and just to execute his Threatnings ; and that in consequence of this, it shall be *well with the Righteous*, and *ill with the Wicked* in another World ; and I am fully perswaded, that a firm and steady Belief of these Things, will, by the Blessing of GOD contribute much to promote the Practice of universal Holiness in Heart, Life and Conversation ; and my Reason for it is, that these Motives to Holiness, taken from the Awe (as the Doctor is pleased to call it) of future Rewards and Punishments, seem excellently well suited to work upon rational Creatures, in whom the glorious GOD, the wise Author of our Being, has implanted a strong Desire of Happiness, and Aversion at Misery. In a Word, seeing these Motives are address'd to our Hopes and Fears, the two great Springs of our Actions, by our blessed LORD and his holy Apostles, in order to engage us to the Practice of our Duty, and to deter us from Sin and Wickedness ; and seeing this is done by the Spirit of GOD, without a nice Explication of the Nature or Justice of them, I think Parents are far from being to blame, tho' they enforce a good Practice upon their Children, by telling them, that GOD

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will shortly render to every one according to the Deeds done in the Body : To these who by a patient Continuance in Well-doing, seek for Glory, Honour, and Immortality; eternal Life : But to these that are contentious, and obey not the Truth, but obey Unrighteousness, Indignation and Wrath, Tribulation and Anguish, unto every one that knows not GOD, and obeys not the Gospel, Rom. ii. 6, 7. 8. 9.— And therefore I cannot help thinking, that it is a very bold and daring Way of speaking in the Doctor, to say, ‘ That the Awe of future Rewards and Punishments, as they are made Use of, without ever explaining the Nature and Justice of them, can contribute no more to promote a liberal Piety and Virtue, a Relish for true Goodness, and Savour of Holiness in the Mind, than Whips and Sugar Plumbs.’

Is it possible the Doctor can think, that the Hope of eternal Happiness will have no more Influence upon a rational Creature, possessed of a Desire of Immortality, to engage him to the Practice of Holiness, than the Hope of a Sugar-plumb ? Or does he imagine, that the Fear of eternal Misery will be of no greater Weight to deter him from Sin, than the Fear of a Whipping ? If he does, he must have a very odd Notion of humane Nature ; for my own Share, I am perswaded, that the only Reason, why these Motives have not that Influence that were to be wished, is, because of Mens Unbelief ; and one great Reason of their Unbelief, is their Pride ; they will not believe any Thing, but what they can understand the Nature and Justice of : Thus vain Man would be wise, tho’ he be born like the wild Ass’s Colt. Mean while, I shall leave it to every impartial Person to consider, whether what the Doctor advances upon this Head, does not look with an unfavourable Eye upon the Doctrine of the Eternity of Hell-torments, seeing many of our modern Infidels, these great Pretenders to Reason, tell us very plainly, they don’t believe it ; and that for this Reason, because they cannot sufficiently account for the Justice of this Dispensation. And thus now I have consider’d what Kind of a religious Education it is that the Doctor blames.

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Let us in the *next* Place consider, what Kind of an Education it is that he recommends, and of this he speaks *Pag. 33. Line 8.* from the Foot, as it is quoted above, in which 'tis observable, there is not one Word of Christianity from Beginning to End, but just such a Plan of Education, as *Collins, Tindal*, or others of that Gang would have prescribed. But how surprizing is it, to hear such a Method of Education recommended by a Christian Teacher, by one that has the Character of a Minister of the Gospel of CHRIST, and who has subscribed the *Westminster* Confession, as the Confession of his Faith; one would have thought that a Christian Pastor, when speaking of the Education of Children, and prescribing a Plan of it to Parents, would have exhorted them to impress their Children with a Sense of their lost State by Nature, their Need of a Saviour, the Insufficiency of their own, and the Necessity of CHRIST's Righteousness, in order to their Justification in the Sight of a holy, just and righteous GOD; one would have thought he would warmly have recommended it to them to instruct them in these great and fundamental Articles of our holy Religion, the Trinity of Persons in the Unity of the Godhead, the Satisfaction of CHRIST, the Nature and Necessity of Regeneration and Conversion, and the like peculiar Doctrines of Christianity; but not one Word of these, nor any Thing like them. These I suppose with our Doctor, are Matters of Intricacy and Nicety, nowise necessary to what he calls a rational and virtuous Education; these are by him look'd upon as the *Sbibboleth* of a Parry, the particular Doctrines of a Sect, which he cautions Parents from inculcating upon young Ones, *Pag. 33.* near the Foot. But for my Part, I think they are Doctrines of the last Moment and Consequence, without the Knowledge and Belief of which, there is no Salvation for poor lost Sinners. They are indeed the *Sbibboleth* of that Parry or Sect of Men, that call themselves Christians; and I hope there is no Reason to be ashamed of them: For tho' the Doctrine of a crucified CHRIST be to the *Jews* a *stumbling Block.* and to the *Greeks* *Foolishness,* yet to these that are called, both *Jews* and *Greeks,* it is the *Power of GOD,* and the *Wisdom of GOD.* Besides, I am abundantly

dantly satisfied, that these are Doctrines more conducive to promote Holiness, than any that the Doctor has substitute in their Place, which he has copied from *Sbafisbury*, and other Patrons of Deism, whose *Sbibboleth* he would have inculcated upon young Ones, while he says, "Great Pains must be taken to instil into them some Understanding of the Nature of true Goodness and Virtue, good Thoughts of GOD, and of the Obligations we are under to him; just Notions of the Nature of pure and undefiled Religion, as it is founded in a Sense of the unalterable Difference betwixt moral Good and Evil, and the Belief of a perfectly good GOD, &c." But if this be all the Education that is to be given to young Ones by Parents and Instructors; if these are the only Principles of Religion they are to be taught, we may lay aside our Confession of Faith and Catechisms, and even the Word of GOD itself; yea, and Ministers of the Gospel may give up with their old Way of Preaching and Instructing; and instead of insisting upon the Doctrines of the holy Bible, betake themselves to the Writings of the old Heathens, and the more modern Disquisitions of our learned Philosophers, about the Foundation of moral Virtue. But I hope there are yet many in this Church, both Parents and Ministers, who have not so learned Christ, and who will not give up with the peculiar Doctrines of our holy Religion, nor thus shamefully deny the LORD that bought them, remembering what our dearest Redeemer himself says, *Matth. x. 32, 33. Whosoever therefore shall confess me before Men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in Heaven; but whosoever shall deny me before Men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in Heaven.* And *Mark viii, 38. Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my Words in this adulterous and sinful Generation, of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he cometh in the Glory of his Father with the holy Angels.* And thus now I have finished my Observations upon the Doctor's Reformation-Sermon.

I proceed now to his other Sermon preached at the *Old Fury*, on *1 Tim. i. 3.* in which there are many Passages,

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that in my Opinion clash with our Standarts ; but I shall only notice at this Time a few of the most glaring, leaving it to some Reverend Minister of this Church, particularly to some of the Presbytery of *Edinburgh*, who no Doubt have look'd into it, to caution the World against the false and erroneous Doctrines therein taught.

PAG. 28th, he says, ' He is conscious to himself, he is as far as any Man from a Disposition to judge rashly, even of those who reject the Words of our Saviour himself, and is willing to leave them to the Judgment of the Searcher of Hearts, whose Mercies are great.' And that we may understand his Meaning in this Passage the better, let us look back to what he says, *Pag.* 22. namely, ' That our Title to the Character of Christians, is by our blessed Saviour put; not upon the Clearness of our Heads, but upon the Honesty and Sincerity of our Hearts; not upon the Exactness of our speculative Notions in Matters of Intricacy and Nicety, but upon the Goodness of our Dispositions, particularly our being well affected towards those of our own Frame and Nature, kindly disposed towards that Body of which we are Members. And *Pag.* 28. he seems to allow the Adversaries of Divine Revelation, ' That Men might possibly have become good and happy, without having had this extraordinary Help.' To the same Purpose also see *Pag.* 29. where he says, ' Will ye confine the abundant Mercy of the great Parent of Mankind, to the bestowing of mere Necessaries on his Children, and not allow it to reach, even to the bestowing of additional Helps, and providing more abundantly for the Fulness of their Joy, and the Security of their Hopes ?

THESE Passages now are all to the same Purpose, and do in my Judgment contain in them very uncouth and erroneous Doctrine. I'm aware however, that his Friends will be ready to say, ' That the Doctor's Design in these Passages, is to defend Christianity, and to baffle its Adversaries; but for my own Share, I'm afraid, that under a Pretence of defending it, he is giving it up. And truly, if we may judge of his Principles as to Christianity, by thir two Sermons of his that he has

has publish'd to the World, 'tis but little of Christianity he will be anxious to defend no more of it than an *Arian* or *Socinian* will contend for; and that, in my Opinion, is scarce worth the defending; for as to the attaining of Life and eternal Salvation, I am so uncharitable as to think, that an *Arian*, *Socinian* and *Deist* are much upon the same Footing.

WE are by Nature Sinners, and so exposed to the Wrath and Curse of GOD, both in this Life, and that which is to come, utterly unable to satisfy his Justice, by any Thing we can do or suffer; and I know of no other Way, for my Share, to obtain the Pardon of Sin, but by believing in, and trusting to the Satisfaction of CHRIST: But how these that deny his Satisfaction can believe in, or trust to it, or how these that impugn his true and proper Deity, can believe his Satisfaction, is to me unconceivable; and therefore I am far from thinking, with the Doctor, that those judge rashly of our modern *Infidels*, who judge them not to be in a State of Salvation, because they reject the Words of our Saviour; nor can I flatter them with any Hopes, that the Searcher of Hearts, whose Mercies are great, will ever shew Mercy to them, if they continue in their Unbelief. On the contrary, I can assure them from the Word of GOD, that if they do not believe in CHRIST, they shall die in their Sins, and perish eternally; they shall be condemned at the Great Day, by the merciful JESUS himself; and *this will be their Condemnation, That Light is come into the World, and they have rejected it, and loved Darknes rather than Light, because their Deeds were Evil.*

I know very well the Doctor is not singular in this charitable Opinion of his, with respect to the Salvation of our modern *Infidels*; there's a good Friend of his, who, if I mistake not, did once, as well as he, come under that great Bar against a free and impartial Enquiry, namely, the Subscription of our Confession of Faith, who, having since been emancipated from such Fetters, and got rid of such awkward Restraints, does plainly declare his Mind upon this Head, and

tells Infidels upon the Matter, that they are in no Danger at all of Damnation, if they be sincere in their rejecting the Gospel, and if they live up to the Principles which they profess to believe, See *Philosoph. Enq. Concerning the Connection between the Doctrine and Miracles of Christ, in a Letter to a Friend*, printed at London 1731, Page 43. his Words are these, 'If you ask me, my Friend, What will be the Fate of an Unbeliever, living among Christians hereafter? I answer, Every Man will be judged by his Works. And one who is conscious to himself of no Prejudice against Christianity, that he has examined it fairly, and yet cannot help doubting, if at the same Time he leads a virtuous, and regular Life, has nothing to fear.'

MEAN While, I think 'tis as evident as any Thing can be, that this Doctrine is directly contrary to that of the holy Scriptures and our Confession of Faith. See to this Purpose, *Acts iv. 12. Neither is there Salvation in any other; for there is none other Name under Heaven given among Men, whereby we must be saved.* And *John xiv. 6. Jesus saith unto him, I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life: No Man cometh unto the Father, but by me.* And *Confess. Chap. 10. Par. 4.* about the Middle, 'Much less can Men, not professing the Christian Religion, be saved in any other Way whatsoever, be they never so diligent to frame their Lives according to the Light of Nature, and the Law of that Religion they profess, and to assert and maintain that they may, is pernicious, and to be detested.'

HERE the Doctor and our Standards clash so evidently, that I perswade myself he and his Friends will be hard put to it to reconcile them; and I'm pretty sure, any Orthodox Sense that can be forc'd upon his Words, will, like the Gloss of *Orleans*, destroy the Text; for it must needs be quite contrary, not only to the Meaning of his Words, but to the very Spirit which runs through the whole of his Discourse; for nothing can be more evident, than that this extensive Charity, of his is grafted upon some favourite Principles of the *Deistical* and *Unitarian* Party which he maintains, and of which he gives

gives us a few Hints in the Passages quoted above, particularly when he says, *Page 22.* 'Our Title to the Character of Christians, is by our blessed Saviour put, not upon the Clearness of our Heads, but upon the Honesty and Sincerity of our Hearts; not upon the Exactness of our speculative Notions in Matters of Intricacy and Nicety, but upon the Goodness of our Dispositions, particularly our being well affected to those of our own Frame and Nature; kindly disposed towards the Body of which we are Members.' That is to say, tho' we be never so much mistaken as to what we believe, or never so ignorant of what we ought to know; yet if we be honest and sincere, if we love our Neighbour, and do Acts of Charity and Mercy to him, we need have no Doubt of Acceptance with GOD, nor of eternal Salvation. For, as these of the Doctor's Way are pleased sometimes to express themselves, an Orthodox Faith, at the best, is but a dexterous and lucky Way of thinking; but Sincerity, Honesty, and Charity to the Poor is Well-doing. But however the Doctor and his Friends may flounder upon this Head, in Commendation of Honesty, Sincerity and Charity; and how much soever they may prefer these Virtues to Faith, or a sound Belief, I shall always be of Opinion, that right believing is doing, and Well-doing too, for else he who believes the Gospel doth nothing at all, or doth an ill Thing: Besides, 'tis plain from Scripture, that a right Belief is the necessary Foundation of all Gospel-Obedience; and therefore, whatever the Doctor, or those of his Way of thinking may imagine, if a Man believe not aright concerning JESUS CHRIST, he cannot trust in him, nor devote himself to him, nor obey him, nor do every Thing in his Name, nor make the spreading of his Honour, and promoting his Interest the End of his Life; all which by the Gospel we are bound to do, as ever we hope to be *Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light.*—I take it therefore to be of very dangerous Consequence to maintain, as our Author does, 'That our Title to the Character of Christians is not put upon the Clearness of our Heads, but upon the Honesty and Sincerity of our Hearts; not upon the Exactness of our speculative Notions in Matters of Intricacy and Nicety, but upon the Goodness of our Dispositions,

'ons, particularly our being well affected to these of our own
'Frame and Nature.'

BUT the Root and Foundation of this Error is a vain Imagination, that the supreme, if not the only End of Christianity, is the Welfare of our Neighbour: Whereas it is clear as the Sun at Noon-day, that tho' this be one End, yet it is but a meaner and lower one; the chief End of it, as I conceive, is the Honour and Glory of GOD, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, in the Eternal Salvation of our Souls: And sure I am, one that rejects the Words of our Saviour, for all his Well-doing, doth not consult this. Mean while the Doctor would consider, that our Title to the Character of Christians, is put not only upon the Honesty and Sincerity of our Hearts, but upon the Clearness of our Heads too, as he is pleased to call it; that is to say, our Title to the Character of Christians is put upon our Faith in CHRIST, as well as upon our Works of Mercy and Charity. See to this Purpose, *John xvii. 3. This is Life eternal, to know thee the only true GOD, and JESUS CHRIST whom thou has sent. And 2 John 9. Whosoever transgresses, and abides not in the Doctrine of CHRIST, bath not GOD: He that abideth in the Doctrine of CHRIST, he bath both the Father and the Son, Ver. 10. If there come any unto you, and bring not this Doctrine, receive him not into your House, neither bid him GOD speed. Ver. 11. For him that biddeth him GOD speed, is Partaker of his Evil Deeds.* In a Word, 'tis plain from holy Scripture, that whatever Title an Unbeliever may (in the Doctor's Opinion) have to the Character of a Christian, he can have no reasonable Hopes of eternal Salvation, while he continues such, notwithstanding of his good Dispositions and Affections towards these of his own Frame and Nature: For our blessed LORD himself tells us, *John iii. 18. He that beliveth on him is not condemned; but he that believeth not, is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the Name of the only begotten Son of GOD. And Ver. 36. He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting Life: He that believeth not the Son, shall not see Life; but the Wrath of GOD abideth on him.* From all which

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it appears, that so much Knowledge and Clearness of Head, as is sufficient to lay a Foundation for Faith in CHRIST, is absolutely necessary to Salvation ; and therefore I am still of Opinion, that these who reject the Words of our Saviour, and abide not in the Doctrine of CHRIST, have not the least Reason to hope for the Mercy of GOD ; on the contrary, Ministers of the Gospel have it in their Commission, to tell every Creature to whom they preach, *that he who believeth not shall be damned*. I shall only add further here, that when our Saviour would express Damnation with an Emphasis, he does it in these Words, *He shall have his Portion with Unbelievers*, Luke xii. 46. Upon the Whole, as it is certain, a Man cannot have any Title to the Character of a Christian, that is void of Honesty and Sincerity, and good Dispositions towards his Fellow-Creatures ; so, on the other Hand, a Man who knows not GOD in CHRIST, and believes not in him, trusts not to his Satisfaction and Merits, is no Christian at all, but an Infidel in the Scripture-Style, and so is in a State of Damnation. To conclude, Knowledge, Faith, and good Works, are all of them necessary, in order to justify our Claim to the Character of Christians ; and consequently, they do but little Service to Christianity, who speak disrespectfully of any of them, as the Doctor here does.

BUT 'tis no Wonder he talks at this Rate, when we consider what he seems plainly to insinuate *Page 28. viz.* That Men might possibly have become good and happy, without the extraordinary Help of a Divine Revelation. And to the same Purpose *Page 29.* he speaks as if he thought the Light of Nature was sufficient to discover mere Necessaries, and that GOD, in giving us a Divine Revelation, has only bestowed some additional Helps, whereby he has provided more abundantly for the Fulness of our Joy, and the Security of our Hopes : From which it appears, that, according to him, there's not only no absolute Necessity for an orthodox Belief, in order to Salvation, but even no absolute Necessity for a Divine Revelation at all : For if what the Light of Nature teaches us, be all that is merely necessary, and if Men may possibly become good and happy without any Thing more, and if the Design
of

of a supernatural Revelation be only to bestow some additional Helps, and to provide more abundantly for the Fulness of our Joy, and the Security of our Hopes, then we may be safe enough whatever erroneous Opinions we entertain, or however ignorant we are of CHRIST's Person, Natures and Offices; yea, though we reject the whole peculiar Doctrines of Christianity, and look upon the glorious Founder of our holy Religion, as a Cheat and Impostor. But whatever the Doctor may think fit to teach on this Head, I shall always be of Opinion, that a supernatural Revelation is absolutely necessary, in order to the Salvation of lost Sinners; and that because, though the Light of Nature may discover to us, that we are in a depraved State, and at Enmity with GOD, yet it doth not give us the least Hint, that GOD will manifest his Mercy, so as to pardon Sin, and be reconciled to Sinners upon their Repentance; nay, on the contrary, without a Revelation Man must conclude, that GOD will punish him for his Sins that are past, in Consequence of his infinite Wisdom, Holiness and Justice. So that as a learned Author* (who deserves well of the Christian Church for his excellent Writings in Defence of Christianity) expresses himself in this depraved State, 'Man, attentive to his own Circumstances, must have been in a Condition infinitely wretched, the Object of the just Indignation of the Almighty, here and hereafter, helpless and hopeless, because no Defence against offended Justice, and must have continued incapable of Hope or Comfort, or of attempting any Means of placating, or obtaining the Protection of the Deity, unless the Mercy of GOD, and the Acceptance of the Attonement provided, had been revealed to him, with Evidence of the Authority of that Revelation, so convincing as to gain absolute Belief; this and nothing less could render Life tolerable.' And indeed the Sentiments of this learned and worthy Gentleman, who is an Honour to his Country and Mother-church, are very agreeable to the Description given of the Case and Circumstances of Unbelievers by the inspired Apostle (*Eph. ii. 12.* where he tells us, that such as are without Christ, *Aliens from the Common-wealth of Israel, and Strangers from the Covenants*

* Christianity near as old as the Creation.

nants of Promise, have no Hope, and are without GOD in the World) but very disagreeable to those of our Doctor, express'd in his two printed Sermons.

BUT however inconsistent Mr. *Wisbart's* Doctrine is with Truth and Orthodoxy, he is consistent enough with himself in his Scheme of Principles, such as they are ; for as he appears to have but a mean Notion of the Necessity of a supernatural Revelation, so he seems to have no great Sense of our Original Sin, Corruption, and Depravation by the Fall, as to me is evident from what he advances, *Page 32.* where, exhorting his Hearers to contribute liberally to the Charity-school, for the Benefit of which he was preaching, he tells them, among other Things, to induce them to this, ' That what they gave this Way, was laid out for forming the Minds of young Ones to true Goodness, and the several Virtues of Piety, Gratitude, Equity, Truth, Humility, and the like, which are so many Branches and Exercises of it, forming them thus, while there is the Advantage of a natural Kindness, and Tenderness of Temper to work upon, and to conspire with the Principles of Reason and Religion, which may be employ'd to improve it into a settled and prevailing Disposition, a rational and religious Principle in the Soul, while the natural Sense of Goodness is yet, in a great Measure, undebauched; and good Instructions and Examples may, in some Measure, take the Start of vicious Habits and Inclinations.'

Now, this I take to be very false and erroneous Doctrine, contrary to the holy Scripture and our Confession of Faith. See to this Purpose, *Rom. viii. 7. The carnal Mind is Enmity against GOD; and is not subject to the Law of GOD, neither indeed can it be. Rom. vii. 18. For I know that in me, that is in my Flesh, dwelleth no good Thing. Colos. i. 21. And you that were sometime alienated, and Enemies in your Minds by wicked Works, yet now hath be reconciled. And Confes. Chap. 6. Par. 4. asserts, That by our original Corruption we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all*

Evil. We may judge then, with what Truth the Doctor affirms, That the natural Sense of Goodness in Children is yet, in a great Measure, undebauch'd, and how far good Instructions and Examples may take the Start of vicious Habits and Inclinations. For my Share, if we be utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all that's good, I am of Opinion, That what the Doctor calls a natural Sense of Goodness in us, is not only in a great Measure, but wholly debauched; and if we are wholly inclined to all Evil, if the natural Mind in Man is Enmity against GOD, I cannot conceive how good Instructions and Examples can, in any Measure, get the Start, not only of vicious Habits, but even of vicious Inclinations: But it is plain, the Doctor has no Notion of the original Corruption of Children; for neither in this, nor his other Sermon, when he is speaking of their Education and Instruction, does he take any Manner of Notice of it, or ever desire Parents to put them in Mind of it; yea, when he is addressing them himself, he speaks to them as if they were either innocent, or already converted and renewed by the Grace and Spirit of GOD; as you may see from his own Words, near the Foot of that Page, "Let me address myself to your good Nature, &c." One would have thought he might have spoken to them of the Corruption of their Nature, and have endeavoured to impress them with a Sense of it, that so they might have seen the Necessity of Regeneration and Conversion: But this is not agreeable to our Doctor's Plan of Education; this with him is to inculcate on them the *Shibboleth* of a Party, and to make them acquainted with Matters of Intricacy and Nicety, that are perplexed and hard to be understood. Mean while I am persuaded, 'tis among the first Things Parents should inculcate upon their Children, that they are by Nature sinful and corrupt; and that, in Consequence of this, unless they are *born again*, they cannot enter into the *Kingdom of Heaven*.

AND thus now I have made some few Observations upon Mr. *Wisbart's* two Sermons; whether they are sufficient to shew, that it is not expedient for the Reverend Synod or Assembly to concur with his Call to be a Minister of *Edinburgh*, or order that Presbytery to do so, the World must judge.

judge. For my own Part, I think they are more than sufficient for this Purpose; yea, I think, if he was a Minister of this Church, the Errors contained in his Sermons, are of such a Nature and Tendency, as would deserve a very high Censure.

I shall only add, that considering the present Situation of this Church, and that there are some, both Ministers and People, who have made what they call a Secession from her, it would be very imprudent in the Reverend Synod of *Lothian* and *Tweeddale*, or the General Assembly of the Church of *Scotland*, to furnish them with a new and stronger Reason for their Secession and divisive Courses, than any that in my Opinion they yet have, by obliging the Presbytery of *Edinburgh* to concur with a Call to One, who has openly in Print contradicted our Standards, and strenuously pleads for a Liberty to every one to do so without Controul.

I conclude, with my hearty Prayer to the Father of Lights, that he may guide all the Judicatories of this Church, and particularly the ensuing Synod and Assembly, by his Holy and unerring Spirit, and that he may inspire the several Members of them more and more with a hearty Zeal for Truth, Peace and Holiness.



P O S T S C R I P T.

SINCE the following Sheets were sent to the Press, I had transmitted me by a Friend from *Edinburgh*, a Copy of the Magistrates Case, in which there are a Variety of Assertions and Insinuations, that seem to bear very hard upon the Reverend Presbytery. The Authors have used a good deal of Freedom with them, in painting them out very oddly; but I reckon this has been owing to the Weakness of their Cause, and the want of solid Arguments that they have used so many hard Words: But whatever be in this, it is not my Business to undertake a Defence of the several Steps of that Reverend Judicatory's Conduct, they are very well able to do it themselves, and I make no Doubt but they will do it, to the satisfaction of the Reverend Synod. I have the Honour to be particularly acquainted with some of them, and have always looked upon them as Persons of quite another Stamp, than in this Case they are represented to be.

THE only Thing that is incumbent on me to notice, is, How far what the learned Lawiers have advanced on the Head of Doctrine serves to take off the Force of my Observations? And truly I am apt to think, that any Thing they have said is to very little Purpose this way; they seem either not to have understood, or not to be willing to understand the State of the Question; and tho' they reflect severely upon the Presbytery, for being of *Popish* and persecuting Principles, yet they themselves maintain and assert, in a very peremptory Manner, the Principles of *Hobbes*, which lay a Foundation for the severest Persecution imaginable, as any one may see, who will take the Trouble to compare what they say, *Page 18.* of their printed Case, with what we meet with in *Hobbes de cive*, from *Chap. 12.* to the End of that Book.

FOR

FOR my own Part, I abominate the Principles both of the *Papists* and *Mr. Hobbes* upon this Head, and that because both of them lay a Foundation for the most cruel and bloody Persecution; but at the same Time I see no Reason for going over to the Camp of *Collins*, *Tindal*, or other modern *Deists*; there is a Mids, a good old Way, as I conceive, which the Compilers of our Confession of Faith fell in with, whereby they have shunned such Principles as lay a Foundation, either for Persecution or *Libertinism*. The Principles they have founded their Doctrine, as to the Power of the Civil Magistrate, upon, are such as these, *viz.* That there is a real Difference between Truth and Error, as real as there is between Virtue and Vice.

2dly, Considering that GOD has given us a Revelation of his Mind and Will in his Word, we are no more at Liberty to believe, as we please, than to live as we list.

3dly, A right Faith as to the great and fundamental Articles of our holy Religion, is as necessary, in order to our glorifying and enjoying of GOD, as a good Practice is.

4thly, These who maintain gross Errors and Heresies, do as really dishonour GOD, as these that live wicked Lives.

5thly, Christian Magistrates are appointed by GOD, not only for the Good of the Society, but for his own Glory: And therefore,

6thly, They are bound in the Discharge of that Trust committed to them by the *KING of Kings*, to punish such as dishonour GOD, suitably to the Nature and Degree of the Offence, as well as those who are guilty of Matters of Wrong and wicked Lewdness, whereby their Neighbours are injured. Yea further, they are to restrain and punish the venting of erroneous Opinions, for this very Reason, because they are dishonouring to GOD, tho' the Venters of them be otherwise good Members of Society. Upon these and the like Principles, I made my Observations on the Doctor's Sermons, and upon these and the like Principles, they may be defended

sended from any Thing that looks like Reasoning in the doctrinal Part of the Magistrates Case : But as my Correspondent has informed me, that the Members of the Presbytery have (tho' with some Difficulty) come at a Copy or two of this Paper, and are designed to answer it as soon as possible, I leave the Defence of the Doctrines of our Confession of Faith to them.

I shall only further observe here, That the Gloss the two learned Lawiers put upon the Doctor's Words, *Page 34.* of his Reformation-Sermon, is so manifestly inconsistent with the evident and natural Construction of the Words themselves, that to me it is a convincing Proof, they have been hard put to it, to defend what he there says, with respect to the Awe of future Rewards and Punishments; for it is as plain as *Sunshine*, that the Thing he there blames Parents for, is, the not explaining the Nature and Justice of future Rewards and Punishments, and not the Nature and Justice of good Actions, as the Appellants would have People believe.

F I N I S.

